

Implementation of the Dylan Steigers Protection of Youth Athletes Act in Montana Schools

The University of Montana's Athletic Training Program intends to conduct a statewide evaluation of the Dylan Steigers Protection of Youth Athletes Act (DSPYAA) as a follow-up to the initial evaluation that was done in 2014 by the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. The initial evaluation work provided us with initial insight to policy development and implementation that is taking place within Montana schools. However, this evaluation also illustrated a significant gap in school administrators, coaches, school nurses, and athletic trainer's knowledge in concussion policy development and implementation, as well as a gap in compliance with the legislation. This previous evaluation will be used to identify the work that can still be done to strengthen this legislative act and create better resources for schools around the state to implement the requirements of the act. Based on the recommendations of the previous evaluation from the Department of Public Health and Human Services Initial Report and HJ 26 which is calling for evaluation of implementation of the DSPYAA, we intend to focus this evaluation on:

- Language that will strengthen the bill for all youth athletes, whether their sport is school-sanctioned or not;
- Continuing to link the importance of a school nurse and a certified athletic trainer on staff in every school in Montana to create the most comprehensive care possible for students and student-athletes;
- Identifying a robust policy template that could be used by schools when developing their own policies;
- Assessing implementation practices, identifying barriers to implementation, and assessing capacity to fully implement the mandates of the legislative act effectively and efficiently;
- Identifying resources needed to sustainably implement the legislative act.

To meet these objectives, three projects are proposed: 1) Assessment of key stakeholder's (coaches, nurses, athletic trainers, principals, superintendents, teachers and athletic directors) knowledge of implementation of the DSPYAA in respective schools/school districts through the use of online survey; 2) Follow up item 1 with focus groups to qualitatively assess implementation of DSPYAA legislation with key stakeholders; and 3) assess concussion knowledge in youth sports participants, parents and coaches in non-sanctioned sports and their parents in Missoula to include youth soccer, football and hockey (high risk sports for concussion).

Project Summaries:

Project #1

Online survey available mid-September 2015 through mid-November 2015. There will be an incentive attached to participation to increase the likelihood of survey participation

Survey #1 will be disseminated to: Coaches, Superintendents, Principals, and Athletic Directors to evaluate all aspects of the legislation for implementation (SB 112 and HJ 26)

Survey #2 will assess teachers and school nurses knowledge of concussions as well as school policies to return a youth athlete back to the classroom after sustaining a concussion

Project #2

Focus groups throughout the state with key stakeholders responsible for implementation of legislation. (Late Fall 2015)

Data collected through the survey and focus groups will investigate:

- o What schools have a policy
- o Who knows about the policy
- o What the implementation plan and/or timeline look like
- o Where schools are in their existing implementation plan and/or timeline
- o A review of each policy and its components
- o The usefulness of the resources available to educate about concussion
- o What tools or methods are being used to track education about concussion
- o What tools or methods are being used to track students who suffer diagnosed concussion and RTP guidelines

Project #3

This addition will focus on knowledge of signs and symptoms of concussion of youth athletes, parents and coaches associated with non-sanctioned athletic activities in Missoula- specifically Missoula Youth Football, Youth Hockey and YMCA/Stryker Soccer
(August 2015-January 2016)

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Target audience: Superintendents, AD's, coaches, principals

Demographics/Background Information

1. What is your role related to schools and/or school organized sports? (Select all that apply)
- | | | |
|----------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Superintendent | Principal | Athletic Director |
| Coach | Teacher | School Nurse |
| Other | | |

2. County where school is located _____

3. Number of students enrolled at your school
- | | | |
|-----------|---------|----------|
| 0-250 | 251-500 | 501-1000 |
| 1001-1500 | 1501+ | |

4. Grade levels taught at your school
- | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Grades K through 5 | Grades K through 12 | Grades K through 8 |
| Grades 6 through 8 | Grades 9 through 12 | |

5. What athletic activities are offered at your school?
- | | | | | |
|--|----------------|------------------------|-------------|--------|
| | Yes, by school | Yes, by non school org | Not offered | Unsure |
|--|----------------|------------------------|-------------|--------|

- Physical Education
- Baseball
- Softball
- Volleyball
- Wrestling
- Soccer
- Football
- Basketball
- Gymnastics
- Cheerleading
- Swimming
- Track & Field
- Cross Country
- Golf
- Lacrosse
- Other _____

6. Does your school have an athletic trainer?
- Yes, we have a full-time athletic trainer
 - Yes, we have a part-time athletic trainer
 - No, we do not have an athletic trainer
 - Unsure

7. Does your school have a school nurse?
 Yes, we have a full-time school nurse
 Yes, we have a part-time school nurse
 No, we do not have a school nurse
 Unsure

Implementation of the Dylan Steiger's Protection of Youth Athletes Act

8. Does your school currently have a policy that aligns with the Dylan Steiger's Protection of Youth Athletes Act (SB 112)?
 Yes
 No, but currently developing
 No, but planning to develop in the future
 No
 Unsure

9. If you answered YES to #8, please select the following components included in your school concussion policy:

	Yes	No	Unsure
Nature and risks of brain injury			
Lists signs, symptoms, and behaviors consistent with brain injury			
Indicates the need to alert a licensed health care provider for urgent recognition and treatment when a youth athlete exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion			
Indicates the need to follow proper medical direction and protocols for treatment and returning to play after a youth athlete sustains a concussion			

10. Which of the following individuals are specifically listed in your school concussion policy to receive the above information? (Select all that apply)

The policy does not list specific individuals	Coaches	Youth athletes
Athletic directors	Certified Athletic Trainers	
Officials	Parents and Guardians	School nurse
		Other

11. Does your school provide concussion education materials to youth athletes and their parents/guardians prior to participation in any organized athletic activity?

Yes
 No
 Unsure

12. Are the athletes AND parents/guardians required to sign a form indicating concussion education materials have been received and return it to the school?

Yes, parents/guardians only
 Yes, youth athletes only

Yes, parents/guardians and youth athletes
We do not have a form
Unsure

13. Does your concussion policy require annual concussion education training of coaches, athletic trainers and officials participating in youth athletic activities?

Yes
No
Unsure

14. Does your school have a system in place to track completion of the required annual tracking of coaches, athletic trainers and officials participating in youth athletic activities?

Yes
No
Unsure

15. What training resources are used to inform your school coaches, officials and other staff on concussion awareness and protocols? (Select all that apply):

National Federation of State High School Associations Concussion in Sports website
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Heads Up website
Montana High School Association website
Brain Injury Alliance of Montana

Unsure

Other _____

16. Do you feel that the training resources you have used to educate school coaches, officials and other staff have been effective in increasing knowledge of concussions?

Yes
No
Unsure

17. Do you feel that the educational materials provided to parents/guardians and youth athletes have been effective in increasing knowledge of concussions?

Yes
No
Unsure

18. Does your school perform computerized baseline cognitive testing on youth athletes? If yes, please select the program used.

IMPACT

King Devick

My school does not use baseline testing

Other _____
Unsure

19. If a youth athlete at your school is suspected of having a concussion, what evaluation tools are used to assess whether an athlete has sustained a concussion? (Select all that apply)

Sideline Assessment Testing (SAC)

Sport Concussion Assessment Tool (SCAT 2 or SCAT 3)

IMPACT

King Devick

Vestibular-Oculomotor Screening (VOMS)

Other

Unsure

20. If a youth athlete has sustained a concussion, identify the person most responsible for making decisions on the athletes return to participation:

Primary Care Physician

School Nurse

School Psychologist

Guidance Counselor

Athletic Trainer

Neuropsychologist

School/Team Physician

Concussion Program/Specialist

Parent

Other

21. Does your school have guidelines or protocols in place to help students recovering from a concussion succeed when they return to school?

Yes

No

Unsure

Assessing Concussion Knowledge in Teachers and Nurses in Montana Schools

Demographics/Background Information

1. What is your role related to schools and/or school organized sports? (Select all that apply)

- Teacher
- School Nurse

2. County where school is located _____

3. Number of students enrolled at your school

- | | | |
|-----------|---------|----------|
| 0-250 | 251-500 | 501-1000 |
| 1001-1500 | 1501+ | |

4. Grade levels taught at your school

- | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Grades K through 5 | Grades K through 12 | Grades K through 8 |
| Grades 6 through 8 | Grades 9 through 12 | |

5. What athletic activities are offered at your school?

Yes, by school Yes, by non school org Not offered Unsure

- Physical Education
- Baseball
- Softball
- Volleyball
- Wrestling
- Soccer
- Football
- Basketball
- Gymnastics
- Cheerleading
- Swimming
- Track & Field
- Cross Country
- Golf
- Lacrosse
- Other _____

6. Does your school have an athletic trainer?

- Yes, we have a full-time athletic trainer
- Yes, we have a part-time athletic trainer
- No, we do not have an athletic trainer
- Unsure

7. Does your school have a school nurse?

- Yes, we have a full-time school nurse
- Yes, we have a part-time school nurse
- No, we do not have a school nurse

Unsure

Concussion Knowledge

8. Which of the following are symptoms of a concussion after sustaining a hit to the head? **Please circle all that apply.**
- a. Vacant stare/glassy eyed
 - b. Drowsiness
 - c. Difficulty Breathing
 - d. Nausea or Vomiting
 - e. Irritability
 - f. Neck Pain
 - g. Inappropriate emotions
 - h. Pale skin
 - i. Excess Sleep
 - j. Sensitivity to light
9. Which of the following are symptoms of a concussion after sustaining a hit to the head? **Please circle all that apply.**
- a. Muscle spasms in your neck
 - b. Black eye
 - c. Sensitivity to noise
 - d. Feeling like "in a fog"
 - e. Poor balance/coordination
 - f. Epistaxis (bloody nose)
 - g. Fatigue or low energy
 - h. Jaw pain
 - i. Sadness
 - j. Ringing in ears
10. Which of the following do you think are consequences of inappropriate care of a concussion? **Please circle all that apply.**
- a. Early onset dementia
 - b. Increased risk of stroke
 - c. Persistent dizziness
 - d. Persistent neck pain
 - e. Death
 - f. Persistent headache
11. Which of the following do you think are consequences of inappropriate care of a concussion? **Please circle all that apply.**
- a. Bleeding in the brain

- b. Early onset Alzheimer
- c. Increased risk of blindness
- d. Early onset Parkinson's
- e. Persistent dizziness
- f. Persistent jaw pain

School Policy Evaluation

12. Have you ever had formal training/education about concussions? (In school, or online)
- Yes
 - No
13. Does your school require you to complete annual training on concussion education?
- Yes
 - No
14. Does your school currently have a policy that aligns with the Dylan Steiger's Protection of Youth Athletes Act (SB 112)?
- Yes
 - No, but currently developing
 - No, but planning to develop in the future
 - No
 - Unsure
15. If a youth athlete has sustained a concussion, identify the person most responsible for making decisions on the athletes return to school:
- Primary Care Physician
 - School Nurse
 - School Psychologist
 - Guidance Counselor
 - Athletic Trainer
 - Neuropsychologist
 - School/Team Physician
 - Concussion Program/Specialist
 - Parent
 - Other
16. If a youth athlete has sustained a concussion, identify the person most responsible for overseeing a student's concussion treatment plan/accommodations:
- School Nurse
 - School Psychologist
 - Guidance Counselor
 - Principal
 - Teacher
 - Other

17. Have you participated in guiding a student's post-concussion graduated academic and activity re-entry process during the past academic year?
- Yes
No
18. Which of the following roles/responsibilities do you have in regards to the care of students post-concussion (Select all that apply)
- Identify suspected concussion
 - Provide advocacy for the prevention of concussions by advocating for a safe environment on the school campus
 - Provide advocacy for the prevention and detection of concussions by educating parents, students, and staff
 - Guide the student's post-concussion graduated academic and activity re-entry process
 - Provide daily medical evaluations for the post-concussion student
 - Communicate regularly with the athletic trainer regarding progress made or setbacks encountered for the post-concussion student
 - Provide emotional support for recovering students post- concussion dealing with depression
19. Does your school have guidelines or protocols in place to help students recovering from a concussion succeed when they return to school?
- Yes
No
Unsure
20. If yes, do they provide for (select all that apply):
- Excused absence from class
 - Rest periods during the school day
 - Extension of assignment deadlines
 - Postponement or staggering of tests
 - Extended testing time
 - Accommodation for light or noise sensitivity
 - Excuse from team sport practices and gym activities
 - Limiting backpack weight
 - Limiting stair usage
 - Limiting the playing of wind instruments
 - Use of a reader (or recorded books) for assignments or testing
 - Use of a note taker or scribe
 - Temporary use of a tutor
 - Preferential classroom seating
 - Reduced workload
 - Use of dull colored paper to reduce light sensitivity
 - Excuse from (or unweight) specific tests and assignments
 - Use of a smaller, quieter examination room
 - Other
 - My school has no guidelines

Implementation of the Dylan Steigers Protection of Youth Athletes Act in Montana Schools
Focus Group Questions

Demographic Information

- Size of school
- Sports
- Staffing
- Grades taught

Implementation of Policy

- When did you develop your school's concussion policy
- How is information/content of the policy disseminated to all individuals affected by/included in the concussion policy
- What are the components of the policy
- How often is the policy reviewed
- Who was involved in the development of the policy
- What resources did you use to develop the policy (other school district policies, websites, etc)

Effectiveness of Training

- Do you require annual training of your coaches, officials and staff
- How do you track completion of this
- Resources used
- Do you feel the existing training available is sufficient in educating coaches, officials, and staff about concussions
- Is there anything you would do to improve the training
- Do you believe that coaches, officials and staff are educated enough to sufficiently detect when an athlete has sustained a concussion

Concussion Assessment and Return to Play

- How many athletes (on average per year) do you think have been removed from play with suspected concussive signs and symptoms
- Do you complete documentation if an athlete has been removed from play following a suspected concussion (injury/incident report)
- What assessment tools are used to evaluate the presence of concussion
- Does your school use computerized cognitive baseline testing
- If so, who pays for this
- Who is primarily responsible for overseeing the day to day care of an athlete after sustaining a concussion
- Who is primarily responsible for ensuring the athlete follows a graduated return to play protocol
- Who is primarily responsible for clearing the athlete to return to play

Concussion Knowledge in Youth Sports Participants and Their Parents in Missoula

Athlete Survey

What sport do you currently play? (Circle one)

Football

Hockey

Soccer

Age: _____

Gender (Circle): Male Female

How many years have you played this sport? _____

1. Which of the following are symptoms of a concussion after sustaining a hit to the head? **Please circle all that apply.**
 - a. Vacant stare/glassy eyed
 - b. Drowsiness
 - c. Difficulty Breathing
 - d. Nausea or Vomiting
 - e. Irritability
 - f. Neck Pain
 - g. Inappropriate emotions
 - h. Pale skin
 - i. Excess Sleep
 - j. Sensitivity to light
2. Which of the following are symptoms of a concussion after sustaining a hit to the head? **Please circle all that apply.**
 - a. Muscle spasms in your neck
 - b. Black eye
 - c. Sensitivity to noise
 - d. Feeling like "in a fog"
 - e. Poor balance/coordination
 - f. Epistaxis (bloody nose)
 - g. Fatigue or low energy
 - h. Jaw pain
 - i. Sadness
 - j. Ringing in ears
3. Which of the following do you think are consequences of inappropriate care of a concussion? **Please circle all that apply.**
 - a. Early onset dementia
 - b. Increased risk of stroke
 - c. Persistent dizziness
 - d. Persistent neck pain
 - e. Death
 - f. Persistent headache

4. Which of the following do you think are consequences of inappropriate care of a concussion? **Please circle all that apply.**

- a. Bleeding in the brain
- b. Early onset Alzheimer
- c. Increased risk of blindness
- d. Early onset Parkinson's
- e. Persistent dizziness
- f. Persistent jaw pain

5. Have you ever talked about the consequences of a concussion **with** your parents or guardians?

- a. Yes
- b. No

6. Have you ever had formal education about concussion? (In school, or online)

- a. Yes
- b. No

7. I understand the dangers of concussions. **(Select one)**

Disagree completely	Somewhat disagree	Neither Agree Or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree Completely
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8. I know the signs and symptoms of a concussion. **(Select one)**

Disagree completely	Somewhat disagree	Neither Agree Or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree Completely
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9. If I am hit in the head and have a headache, it is OK to continue to play, as long as I didn't lose consciousness (i.e., black out). **(Select one)**

Disagree completely	Somewhat disagree	Neither Agree Or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree Completely
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10. If I think I may have a concussion, it is OK to continue to play soccer. **(Select one)**

Disagree completely	Somewhat disagree	Neither Agree Or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree Completely
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11. Given the choice, in what form would you like to receive educational info?

- a. Power-point
- b. Poster
- c. Pamphlet
- d. Flyer